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NRO REVIEW COMPLETED

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SAPC-25666 ✓

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**MEMORANDUM FOR:** Project Cover Officer

25 March 1958

**SUBJECT** : Release of NACA Top Secret Research Data to  
Select Contractors

**REFERENCE** : Memorandum to Project Director, same subject,  
dated 14 March 1958 (SAPC-25309)

1. This will confirm our conversation on the above matter. It is my feeling that we cannot agree either to the declassification or general dissemination of data obtained at altitudes from 55,000 to 70,000 feet or to the granting of AQUATONE clearances to a wider circle of individuals who might be interested in having access to this data. On the other hand, it would certainly be desirable to have it available to contractors who might make good use of it.

2. I therefore suggest that you advise NACA as follows:

a. The data in question must remain classified but the classification may be reduced to **SECRET**.

b. It cannot be given any wider dissemination than it presently receives unless a suitable explanation can be devised of the way in which the data was collected which will attribute it to some source or sources other than the U-2.

c. If such an explanation can be devised, the data may be disseminated to selected contractors and others who might have use for it.

3. An example of a suitable explanation might be: That as is well known in the industry a number of experimental (mainly military aircraft) have made flights to extremely high altitudes; that the Air Weather Service in consultation with NACA has been able to instrument a number of these flights to collect data on turbulence; that the NACA has analyzed the data thus collected and presents the results herewith. This story does make clear that the data collected is from aircraft flights rather than from

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balloons or rockets but by stating that a number of different aircraft were involved it would tend to divert attention away from speculation concerning what particular aircraft was used. I am not at all sure this story will standup but suggest it as an example of what would be acceptable.

*7/seen m*  
**RICHARD M. BESSELL, JR.**  
Project Director

RMB: ☐  
1-Addressee  
2-Dep Pro. Director  
3-Pro. Dir of Admin  
4-Pro. Dir of Ops  
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6-Pro. Dir Chrono  
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